Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

Economic Statistics Released During the Week of April 14, 2003 to April 18, 2003

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Housing Starts (Thousands)	March			Canadian housing starts were at 210,500 in March, down 14.5% from February. Seven provinces experienced monthly decreases, although on a year-to-date basis Canadian starts were down only 0.4% compared to the first three months of 2002. Alberta housing starts declined by 1.4% from February, but were up 5.2% from the same period last year.
Alberta	40,800	-1.4%	5.2%	
Canada	210,500	-14.5%	-2.2%	
New Motor Vehicle Sales	February			New motor vehicle sales in Canada rebounded strongly in February, increasing by 14.1% after recording a 14.3% decline the previous month. New passenger car sales rose by 10.6% from January, while truck sales jumped by 18.6%. All provinces experienced monthly gains, with the largest increases in total sales occurring in Newfoundland (28.8%) and Prince Edward Island (28.0%). On a monthly basis, Alberta sales increased by 11.3%.
Alberta	17,236	11.3%	-0.2%	
Canada	144,654	14.1%	1.4%	
Manufacturing Shipments ($ millions)	February			In February, Alberta's manufacturing shipments were up 2.1% from the previous month, and 19.1% higher than the same period last year, supported by higher prices for petroleum and coal products. Alberta was one of only three provinces to record a monthly increase in shipments, along with Manitoba (+2.4%) and Quebec (+1.3%). For Canada as a whole, manufacturing shipments declined by 0.9%, with 16 of 21 industries registering decreases for the month. February's national decline was concentrated in the durable goods sector. Durable goods shipments fell by 2.0%, highlighted by a 2.4% drop in motor vehicles shipments.
Alberta	3,828	2.1%	19.1%	
Canada	44,157	-0.9%	4.7%	